Caring for Old Akin to Child Care

By Ann Landers

Dear Ann Landers: I simply must respond to the letters in your column from children who complain about the inconvenience of taking care of elderly parents.

We all know that caring for the elderly is not an easy job, but don't those children realize it was no piece of cake to care for them when they were young? In fact, the dependency of the old is similar to that of infants.

The man from Colorado describes the loss of social life, confinement and the enormous energy that must be expended taking care of his elderly mother and dad. He goes on to complain about the cost of medicine. Doesn't "Colorado" realize it was time-consuming and costly to raise him and his brothers and sisters to adulthood? They didn't survive alone.

My parents are in their late 60s and in excellent health. But if they should become ill, you can be sure they will always have a place under my roof. My husband and I are setting up a special fund so that if we should require special care in our old age, we will be able to afford outside help to come in and tend to our needs. You see, Ann, our parents raised more loving children than we did. Enough said. — Superior, Wis.

Dear Superior: Your story is one I have heard before. But in all fairness we must take into consideration the differences in lifestyle.

Today, we have smaller dwellings and many more working wives. No one is at home to care for the old folks. It's a different world and the care of the elderly has suffered because of it. A sad story indeed. Here's another one — with a different twist.

Dear Ann: May I say something to childless women who feel uncomfortable when they get together with their friends and the conversation is all about kids?

Those babies don't stay babies forever. They grow up to be teenagers, and that's when the disappointments, tears, anger, anguish, frustration, and hurt set in.

When you have spent a good part of your life, time, effort and money in loving care and get nothing in return, it's pretty dismal. We are not asking for the moon, we would just like to get a little pleasure out of our kids.

If I had my life to live over again, I would not have a family. We did all the "right stuff," yet our children are insensitive, thoughtless, self-centered adults.

Having kids will not guarantee happiness. Get a couple of dogs instead. They always will give you pleasure and you will end up with more money in your pockets besides. — Smart Too Late In Connecticut

Dear S.T.L.: Your story reflects a lot of pain and disappointment. My condolences — to you — and your children.

Fashion

Lady Coal Miner





